Job vacancies continue to rise

Media Release

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Source: Job Vacancies, Australia, February 2021

Job vacancies in Australia increased by 14 per cent between November 2020 and February 2021, according to new seasonally adjusted figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Bjorn Jarvis, head of Labour Statistics at the ABS, said job vacancies were 27 per cent higher than 12 months earlier in February 2020, just before the start of the pandemic.

"There were 289,000 job vacancies in February 2021, 61,000 more than a year earlier," Mr Jarvis said.

"This reflected the pace of recovery in labour demand over the second half of 2020 and early 2021, and labour shortages in some industries.

"When we asked businesses experiencing labour shortages the reasons for this, more than usual noted difficulty in filling vacancies for lower paid jobs.

"This was most commonly reported to us by businesses in the Accommodation and food services industry. 31 per cent of businesses in that industry reported vacancies in February 2021, more than double last February (15 per cent)."

Private sector job vacancies increased by 14 per cent over the February quarter, and were 29 per cent above the pre-pandemic levels of February 2020.

Public sector job vacancies rose by 11 per cent in February, an increase of 13 per cent on February 2020.

In original terms, all states and territories experienced quarterly increases in vacancies. For the first time during the pandemic, Victoria joined the rest of the states and territories with more vacancies than a year ago.

The largest percentage increases in job vacancies over the year were in the Accommodation and food services (88 per cent), Construction (60 per cent), and Other services industries (44 per cent).

The rise in job vacancies in February follows the release of the ABS' Business Conditions and Sentiments for February (https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/business-indicators/business-conditions-and-sentiments/feb-2021) , in which 13 per cent of employers reported staff shortages as a factor significantly impacting their business.

The ABS would like to thank businesses in Australia for their continued support in responding to our surveys during this difficult time.

Media notes

- When reporting ABS data you must attribute the Australian Bureau of Statistics (or the ABS) as the source.
- For the purposes of this publication, 'pre-COVID' refers to the February 2020 Job Vacancies, which was before the main impact of restrictions on businesses.
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